REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 are pending in this application.

Claims 7, 9, and 10 were objected to because of informalities. Claim 7 has been amended to overcome these objections.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 had been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Homma *et al*, US 4,907,287 (henceforth Homma) in view of Zaluzec, US 6,548,810 B2. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 comprise the element of sending control signals to a positioning means to cause a motion of the positioning means to compensate for changes in the observable image of the specimen.

Zaluzec does not teach or suggest this element.

The Examiner states that Homma describes this element in col. 18, line 37, to col. 20, line 25. See page 3 of the pending Office Action.

Applicant respectfully disagrees

Homma describes an image correction system for a scanning electron microscope. Homma's system is designed to compensate for image blur and distortions caused by mechanical vibrations and magnetic fields of the microscope power sources. The primary means of image correction in Homma is by improving images in the image memory of Homma's system.

In the pending Office Action, Examiner refers to the part of Homma describing "varying the scan control signal of an electron beam scanning system" to compensate for vibration and to keep the specimen under observation within the field of view.

However, varying the scan control signal of an electron beam in Homma, contrary to the present invention, does not involve any motion of any positioning means.

As explained hereinabove, sending control signals to a positioning means to cause a motion of the positioning means to compensate for changes in the observable image of the specimen is not taught or suggested in Homma, Zaluzec, or their combination. Therefore, Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 are patentable and nonobvious over Homma and Zaluzec under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and should be allowed.

It is believed that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited in this case. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

HOUSTON ELISEEVA LLP

By /Maria M. Eliseeva/

Maria M. Eliseeva
Registration No.: 43,328
Tel.: 781 863 9991
Fax: 781 863 9931

4 Militia Drive, Suite 4
Lexington, Massachusetts 02421-4705
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